ROBERT KIRKMAN LORENZO DE FELICI PATRICIO DELPECHE
VOID RIVALS
image
#10

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ZERTONIA.
I AM NOT TO BE SUMMONED.
I AM NO SERVANT TO CALL AS YOU WISH. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS, DULIN?
DO NOT BARK AT ME, USURPER!
MY POSITION WAS EARNED BY BLOOD RIGHT. NOT STOLEN--
HOW DARE YOU?!
NO. STOP.
I AM SORRY, MY FRIEND. THIS IS NOT THE PURPOSE OF MY MESSAGE. MY FRUSTRATION IS STEERING OUR INTERACTION.
AS A FATHER YOURSELF, YOU MUST UNDERSTAND MY PLIGHT. I HAVE TO KNOW...
WHAT OF MY SON?
HE YET LIVES.

DO I DETECT... RELIEF?
MINISTER DULIN, IS YOUR RESOLVE WAVERING? HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN WHAT IS AT STAKE?
I HAVE NOT.
WHY HAS MY SON'S EXECUTION BEEN DELAYED? IS YOUR RESOLVE WAVERING?
...
IT IS IN PROCESS AND WILL BE HANDLED SHORTLY. I ASSURE YOU.
THEY ESCAPED, DIDN'T THEY?
BLII--

I'M SO THANKFUL NONE OF MY FRIENDS ARE HERE TO SEE THIS...
SHAKK
VZAP
VZAP
THEN NONE SHALL BE HERE TO MOURN YOUR DEATH EITHER.
EH. IT'S A TRADE-OFF.
ACTUALLY-- THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA!

CH-
CHIK-CH
CHUCHIK CH
WHAT IN--
VROOM
WRAMM
IT OCCURS TO ME A WORLD WITH SUCH WELL-TRAINED FIGHTERS PROBABLY DON'T THINK TO TRAIN FOR FIGHTING VEHICLES.
SKEEEEEE

WHAT THE HECK IS THIS THING? I'VE NEVER SEEN A WACKY DOOHICKEY LIKE THIS IN MY LIFE.
HANDROID?
I'M NOT READING ANYTHING THAT WOULD HELP ME IDENTIFY ITS ORIGIN. ALL I CAN TELL YOU IS THAT IT IS VERY, VERY OLD.
TWO VER--
WRAKK
DON'T TOUCH THAT!
=/IIRRK!=
SOLILA!
YOU'RE ALIVE!
WHUDD
*
I'LL JUST... PUT THAT BACK WHERE I FOUND IT FOR NOW.

YOU'LL SOON LEARN, NO MATTER WHAT FORM MY OPPONENT TAKES--I DO NOT LOSE!
VAKOOM
CH-CHIK-CH CH-II
I'VE GOT MORE TRICKS UP MY SLEEVE--TRY TO KEEP UP!
VZAPP VZAPP
CHOOM CHOOM
SHUNK

NEVER HAS A WORTHY OPPONENT BEEN SO...
SMALL.

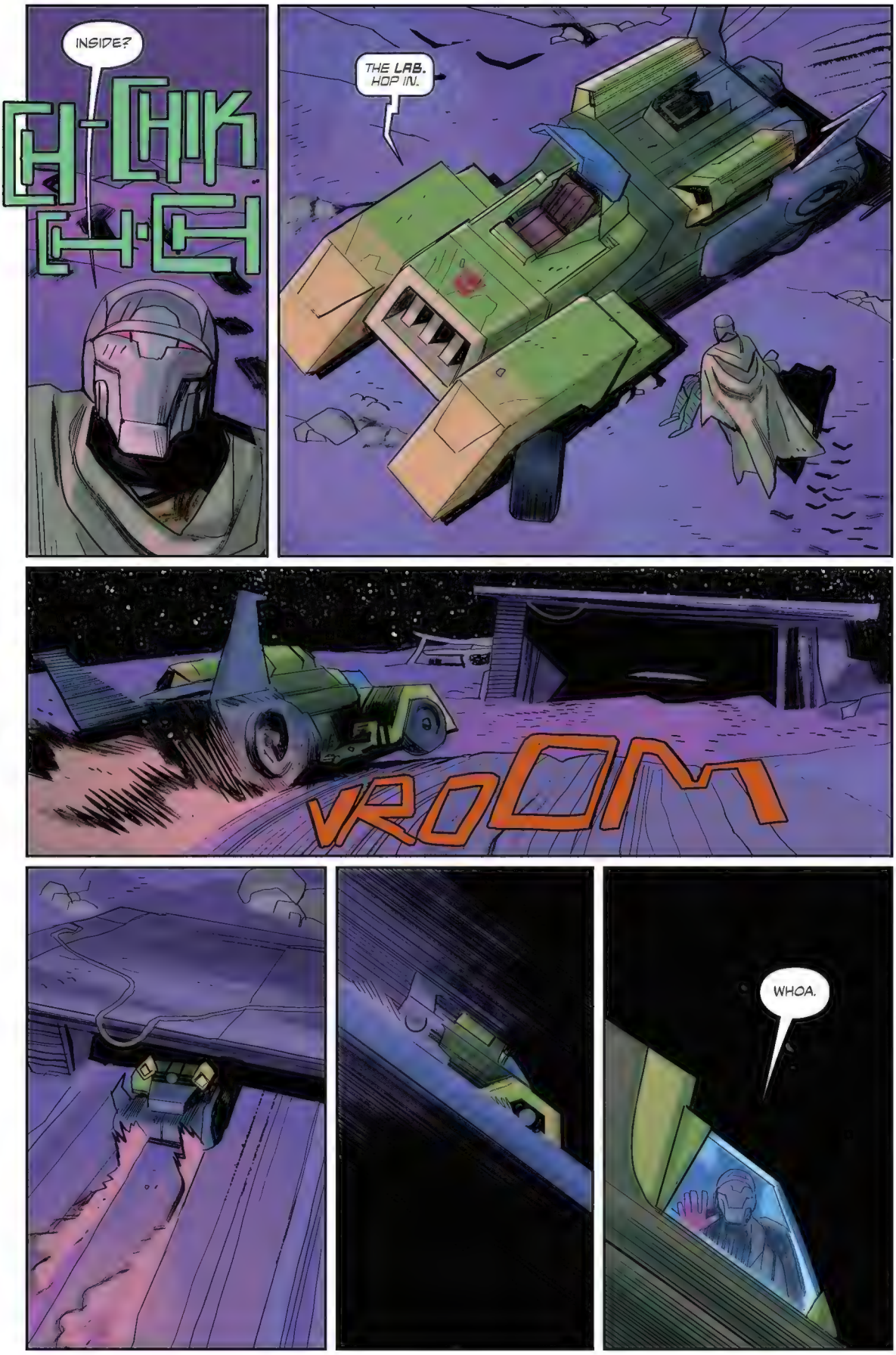
NOW, WHERE'D THOSE OTHER LITTLE GUYS GET OFF TO?

TALKING HAND GUY?!
HELLO?

HELP. SHE'S GETTING WORSE.

OKAY. GOT YOU.
FIRST, LET ME SECURE--

HUH.
WELL... I DON'T THINK HE'LL GET FAR MISSING AN ARM AND A LEG.
LET'S... GET YOU INSIDE.


INSIDE?
CLICK CLICK
THE LAB. HOP IN.
VROOM
WHOA.

CHK CHK
HOW LONG HAS ALL THIS BEEN DOWN HERE?
ALMOST A HUNDRED YEARS.
SAME AS ME. I MEAN, AFTER I BUILT IT, OF COURSE.
I USED WHAT WAS LEFT OF MY CRASHED SHIP, AS WELL AS PARTS OF THIS STRUCTURE AS I EXCAVATED IT. I'VE HAD...
A LOT OF TIME TO MYSELF.

OKAY, YOU HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING WE CAN USE TO HELP MY FRIEND.
WHOA!
WHERE'D YOU GET THAT?
YOU MEAN MY MIND EYE?
NO. I MEAN YOUR ENERGON PORT. I RECOGNIZE THAT.
DOES SHE HAVE ONE OF THOSE?
NOT EXACTLY THE SAME, BUT YEAH.
WAIT, WHAT DID YOU CALL IT?!
REMARKABLE.
THIS I CAN WORK WITH.

IT IS TIME FOR YOU TO AWAKEN, SOLILA, MY CHILD.
I AM NOT ASLEEP.
ZERTONIANS, AGORRIANS. ALL OF YOU ARE SLEEPING.
IN A SENSE.
FIRST, YOU WILL AWAKEN. THEN YOU WILL AWAKEN THE REST. THE TIME OF UNITY DRAWS NEAR.
UNITY?
ALL WILL BE REVEALED TO YOU IN TIME, IF YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO SEE IT.
ZERTA.
THAT IS A NAME I ANSWER TO, YES.
I LIVE TO SERVE YOU. YOUR WILL IS MINE. YOU HAVE ONLY BUT TO ASK AND IT WILL BE DONE. THIS, I PROMISE. THIS I HAVE ALWAYS PROMISED.
WHAT WILL YOU HAVE ME DO?

YOU ARE THE STRONGEST OF MY CHILDREN. IT IS BESTOWED UPON YOU A GLORIOUS QUEST. YOU MUST VENTURE INTO THE UNKNOWN DEPTHS OF YOUR WORLD.
THERE, YOU WILL ENDURE A TRIAL NEVER ASKED OF YOUR KIND BEFORE.
YOU MUST FIND ME.

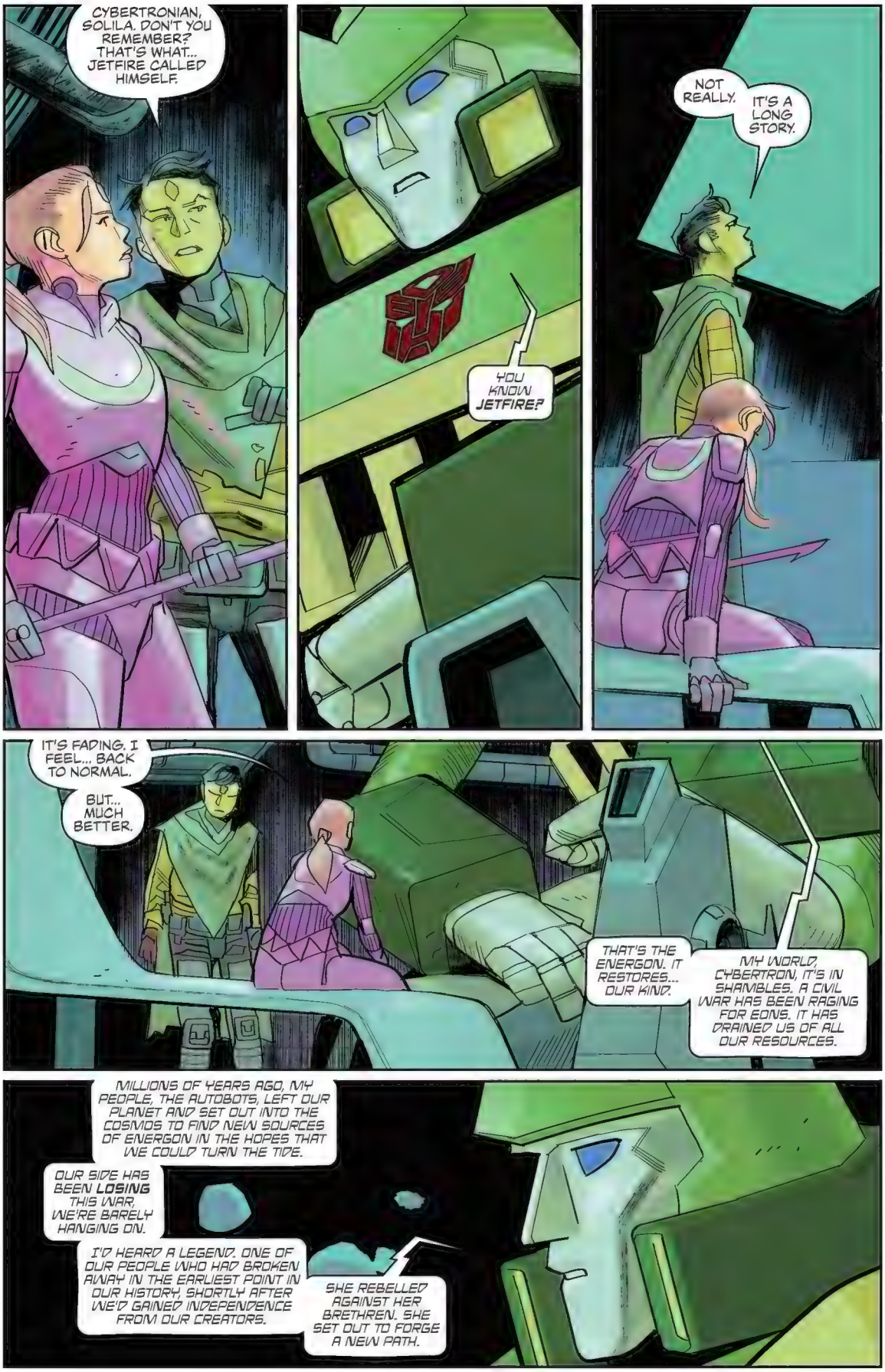
BUT... HOW COULD I EVER DO THAT?
I WOULDN'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN.

MY CHILD, YOUR JOURNEY HAS ALREADY BEGUN. THE AGORRIAN BEGAN IT FOR YOU, LONG AGO.
THE NEXT STEP IN YOUR JOURNEY WILL BE DIFFICULT, TO BE SURE...
BUT I HAVE ALREADY GIVEN YOU A KEY.
A KEY?

:GASP!:
...
WHY DO YOU STARE AT ME SO?

IT'S KIND OF HARD TO EXPLAIN.
WHAT-- WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?!
THAT'S THE ENERGON. IT'LL FADE ONCE YOUR ENERGY LEVELS STABILIZE.

EXPLAIN WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO ME-- AT ONCE!
HE'S SAVED YOUR LIFE, FOR ONE.
OKAY. YOU MEAN... MORE SPECIFICALLY, AS IN HOW. I GET IT.
SORRY.
ENERGON. IT'S A CONCENTRATED FORM OF ENERGY. MY PEOPLE USE IT AS FUEL. IT'S OUR... FOOD.
YOUR PEOPLE... AGORRIANS AND ZERTONIANS, YOU'RE ORGANIC, BUT YOUR PHYSIOLOGY HAS ELEMENTS OF... A... SYNTHETIC NATURE THAT APPEARS TO BE CYBERTRONIAN IN ORIGIN.
AT LEAST... AT A CELLULAR LEVEL.
THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING REALLY.
THIS PLACE, YOUR WORLD...
THE SACRED RING.
THE SACRED RING, YES. IT SEEMS TO BE AN ENGINE THAT GENERATES ENERGON THAT FUELS IT FOR A PURPOSE... I HAVE YET TO DISCERN.


CYBERTRONIAN, SOLILA. DON'T YOU REMEMBER? THAT'S WHAT... JETFIRE CALLED HIMSELF.
YOU KNOW JETFIRE?
NOT REALLY. IT'S A LONG STORY.
IT'S FADING. I FEEL... BACK TO NORMAL.
BUT... MUCH BETTER.
THAT'S THE ENERGON. IT RESTORES... OUR KIND.
MY WORLD, CYBERTRON, IT'S IN SHAMBLES. A CIVIL WAR HAS BEEN RAGING FOR EONS. IT HAS DRAINED US OF ALL OUR RESOURCES.
MILLIONS OF YEARS AGO, MY PEOPLE, THE AUTOBOTS, LEFT OUR PLANET AND SET OUT INTO THE COSMOS TO FIND NEW SOURCES OF ENERGON IN THE HOPES THAT WE COULD TURN THE TIDE.
OUR SIDE HAS BEEN **LOSING** THIS WAR. WE'RE BARELY HANGING ON.
I'D HEARD A LEGEND. ONE OF OUR PEOPLE WHO HAD BROKEN AWAY IN THE EARLIEST POINT IN OUR HISTORY, SHORTLY AFTER WE'D GAINED INDEPENDENCE FROM OUR CREATORS.
SHE REBELLED AGAINST HER BRETHREN. SHE SET OUT TO FORGE A NEW PATH.

HER NAME WAS ZERTA TRION.
ZERTA...
TRION?
WHAT DOES THIS... "TRION" MEAN?
IT IS A TITLE THAT DENOTES GREAT WISDOM AND AUTHORITY. ONLY TWO OF MY KIND HAVE EVER EARNED ITS HONOR.
DO YOU... BELIEVE HIM?
THE BIG GREEN ROBOT?
HONESTLY, IT ALL SOUNDS PRETTY CRAZY, BUT I HAVE TO ADMIT, WHEN YOU TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION, I JUST SAW HIM POUR GLOWING LIQUID INTO YOUR FOREHEAD AND BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE...
WELL...
NOTHING HE SAYS MAKES ANY LESS SENSE THAN WHAT I'VE ALREADY SEEN.
OKAY, TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT ZERTA... TRION.
THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE TO TELL, REALLY. SHE WAS--
KROOM
THE HECK IS THAT?!

ZERTONIA.
EARLIER.
THAT'S IT. THE SIGNAL IS LOST.
LOST? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
IT COULD MEAN ANY NUMBER OF THINGS. PROXIMUS COULD BE IN A HEAVY SOLAR STORM. HE COULD HAVE FOUND THE TRACKER WE PLACED IN HIM AND DISABLED IT.
OR HE COULD HAVE BEEN INJURED IN A WAY THAT WOULD HAVE DAMAGED THE TRACKER.
INJURED?
I WANT AN ENTIRE SQUADRON DEPLOYED ON PROXIMUS'S LAST KNOWN LOCATION IN THE WASTELAND AT ONCE.
LAUNCH THE BLASTWINGS IMMEDIATELY.
A WHOLE SQUADRON? DO YOU KNOW WHAT I'LL HAVE TO PROMISE THOSE MEN TO GET THEM TO VENTURE INTO THE WASTELAND?
WE DON'T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO SPARE.
YOU ARE THE MINISTER OF ARMS.
YOU SEND OUR WEAPONS WHERE I COMMAND. I WILL WORRY ABOUT RESOURCES.
AM I CLEAR?
YES, PREMIERE ZALILAK.
AT ONCE, PREMIERE ZALILAK.

HANG ON-- ALMOST THERE.
SKREEE
CHK-CHK-CH
THAT HAD TO BE NEARBY. IT SOUNDED LIKE AN EXPLOSION.
YOUR LIMBLESS FRIEND MIGHT BE BACK TO CAUSE SOME TROUBLE. I SHOULD HAVE SEEN THAT COMING.
NO.
IT'S WORSE THAN THAT.
MUCH WORSE.

WELL, CRAP.
IT REALLY FELT LIKE WE WERE GOING TO LIVE THROUGH THIS FOR A MINUTE THERE.

TALK TO THE HANDROID

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO VOIDRIVALS@SKYBOUND.COM

Thank you dear readers for joining us for another senses shattering issue of VOID RIVALS! What did you think of Springer vs Proximus: Round Two? Ben Abernathy reporting for duty as editor and co-host!

And Robert here as well, I'm in italics, or another color, or another color AND italics. I don't even know! How could I ever find out? Look at this copy of VOID RIVALS #7 sitting on my desk next to me? What's the fun in that? This is the kind of hard-hitting commentary you're here for right?

I hope it shows how much we're having fun on this series. The entire Energon Universe is a labor of love and I can't believe we're almost to the start of YEAR TWO. It's going to be crazy! I hope you're all along for the ride.

Support from this community has been abundant. So thank you so much for that! Hopefully we'll all be exploring this universe together for many years to come! But for now, let's just answer some mail!

. . . . . .

Dear TTTH,

VR #07. Always leave em wanting more, eh? This issue's story was so thin a read, it literally had me exclaiming "That's it?!" at the end. I had read TWD Deluxe #84 right before this, and let me just say: There's no comparison! Skybound wants to be going uphill not...the opposite. I get that you're still in it for the long haul, but where are the Battles, the Conflict, in this series? Only just good enough this time with #07!

Cheers,
Andrew J. Shaw

You're right, Andrew...Always leave them wanting more! Thanks for reading!

Ben Abernathy coming in with the HEAT. Opening a letters column with Andrew J. Shaw! Wow! Sorry you didn't think there was enough meat on those issue 7 bones, Andrew. I wanted to give Proximus' introduction a lot of weight as I knew we'd be spending a lot of time with him. I am definitely trying to keep this series from being as dense as The Walking Dead. Sometimes I write dialogue heavy books and sometimes I don't think that's right for the series. This book is a completely different animal than THE WALKING DEAD... in about a thousand different ways.

. . . . . .

Hello!

I've been keeping up with the series since day one and I've been really enjoying it! But I have a question: how old are Darak and Solila? At least in relation to one another? I've noticed that Darak seems to be graying in some panels and in issue 7 we see visible aging on his face. The flashbacks are a decade ago and he's still an adult, so he's ~30 at the youngest. Solila doesn't have any signs of aging so she looks to be somewhat younger by Darak. I was thinking maybe 5-10 years younger? This is assuming that they age like humans, of course.

Thank you!

Davis B.
Utah

They are both adults and they are relatively close in age, is all I'll say for now. We've yet to reveal how Agorrians and Zertonians age or what their lifespans are...So stay tuned as more is revealed.

. . . . . .

Hey talk to the Handroid! How dare you leave me hanging like that in issue 08!! I must say I love probably too much love the Energon Universe Void Rivals then Transformers to Duke and Cobra Commander!!! Any more side issues and I'm gonna go broke! But it's worth it for such an amazing universe my only wish is we get hard covers with all the story's combined. Robert Kirkman is one of my fav writers and Lorenzo de Felici is chefs kiss thanks for everything you guys

are doing any chance we see Cobra in Void Rivals ? Or vise versa?

Christian Howard
Rohnert Park California

Sorry for the damage we're doing to your wallet Christian (but not sorry). You broach an interesting question about Cobra and Void Rivals...any chance you read COBRA COMMANDER #5?

It's all connected!

. . . . . .

Sirs Kirkman, De Felici, Delpeche, and Wooton,

I am thoroughly enjoying this trek through the void with Darak and Solila. Thank you for giving space for the reader to really take in the awesome magnitude of the journey at hand as you begin the second story arc.

Yes! That is what we were doing... Mr. Shaw!!

Issue 7 is a visual, storytelling feast!!!

Pages 4-7 encourages awe to wonder about all that was and all that is to come. The intense solar winds on pg. 9 made the landscape even more wild and forbidding and foreshadowed an awesome scene in Issue 8.

But, turning to page 10, my heart dropped. The scarred boulder like face of Zalilak along with the incredible coloring, sucked the solar winds out and brought the menace into focus. And, then a 16 panel page before Proximus is revealed, left me totally breathless.

This issue is one of those that you can point a new fan to and say, this is how comics are done!

I believe Void Rivals will be the glue for the Energon Universe. And, I can't wait until Handroid interfaces with Cybertronian tech!

Keep the Energon Flowing!

Aaron
The Bronx, NYC

I 100% agree, Aaron, and had the very same feeling when reading the script. The gang did a terrific job on the introduction of Proximus...how often are 16 panels pages that freakin' cool?!

What a lovely letter, Aaron. Always nice to hear kind words about the work we're doing here. It's a true labor of love but it's always a nice bonus to hear how other people are enjoying the thing you're enjoying. Now, I must be critical. As nice as letters like this are, you're not really giving us any low hanging fruit in the response department. Fan letters are a spectrum. On one end, you have letters like the one from Andrew J. Shaw that opened this letters column. On the other end, yours. The pure positive to the pure negative. Both are equally hard to respond to. Often times you find yourself vamping to fill space, tying word after word after word just to give that elite 8% of the audience who actually reads letters columns their money's worth. So really, you need a letter in that sweet spot in the middle, positive, but at least they ask a question. Negative, but only so much so that it's critical and it sparks a nice discussion. Those are the letters we really savor here at Skybound Central.

. . . . . .

I'm pretty sure I know the big twist: what the sacred ring is, and that the leadership of both Agorrians and Zertonians must keep the war raging. The one thing I don't know is the mechanics behind it. I am interested to find out.

It's not obvious like "The Sixth Sense" - oh he was dead the whole time I should have seen that coming, but obvious to fans of the Transformers franchise. It's perfect and smart if it is what I think it is. Everyone is going to freak.

From one writer to another, my deep appreciation and thanks for FINALLY telling smart human stories about giant robots and aliens from distant worlds. Keep up the work Mr. Kirkman (if you're reading this).

--Peter

I am in fact reading this and I am also hoping you haven't figured out what we're doing here. I don't think you have.

Although... if you think* The Sixth Sense *reveal was obvious... maybe you're far better at figuring things out than most people! Either way, I do promise you'll still enjoy the ride!

. . . . . .

Join us next month for the penultimate issue in our epic second arc! Pre-order it now as it's going to FLY off the shelves!

—Ben Abernathy

Yes indeed! It's going to be an absolute BLAST! Get ready!

—Robert Kirkman

THE COBRA THREAT CONTINUES
DESTRO
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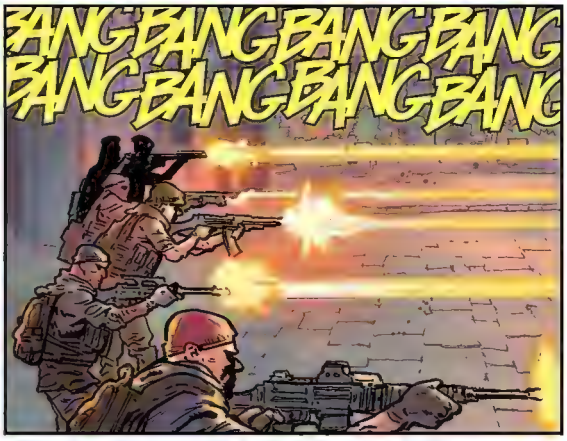
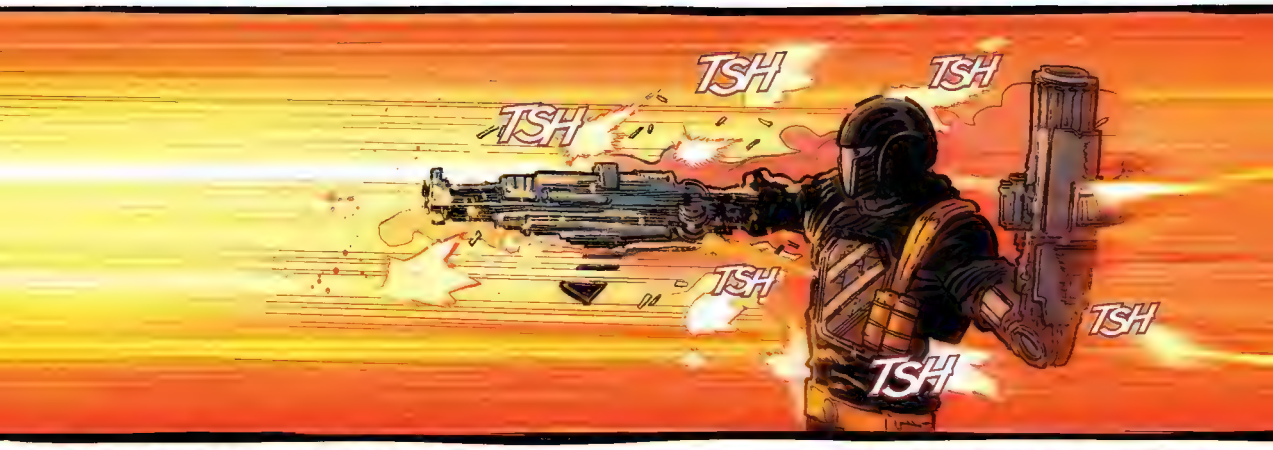
THE REVOLUTION IS CANCELLED, I'M AFRAID, BOYS AND GIRLS--ON ACCOUNT OF YOUR VASTLY INFERIOR FIREPOWER.
UH, WHO THE HELL IS THAT?

BATTLE ANDROID TROOPER
[ADVANCED PROTOTYPE]
HEAT SIGNATURE TARGETING SYSTEM
MODULAR GATLING ARM CANNON
(SUBSTITUTABLE)
LOGIC CIRCUITRY
(PROTOTYPE)

CH-CHK


BANG BANG BANG BANG
BANG BANG BANG BANG


TSH
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TSH

HOW IS IT STILL STANDING?
WHERE DID IT COME FROM?
OH, GOD! UP THERE...

"...THERE ARE MORE INCOMING!"

I TOLD THEM TO SHOOT TWO OR THREE OF THEM.
BOYS WILL BE BOYS, I SUPPOSE.
FALL BACK! BACK TO THE PALACE!
WE'RE OVERRUN! THEY AREN'T HUMAN! THEY'RE MACHINES!
IT--IT CAN'T BE HIM. GET ME OUT OF HERE!
IT'S TOO LATE.
THEY HAVE BREACHED IT! THE PALACE IS BEING LIBERATED!
SUPPORT THE EMANCIPATORS!
TEAR DOWN THE THRONE OF POWER!
IT... IT IS HIM. GET ME A DIRECT LINE.

DARKLONIA IS FREE!
PEACE
BANG BANG BANG
BANG BANG BANG BANG
WE DESERVE PEACE
LAIRD DESTRO.
THE DARKLONIAN PEOPLE ACCEPT YOUR RESIGNATION, PRIME MINISTER.

THE ENERGON UNIVERSE BEGINS HERE!

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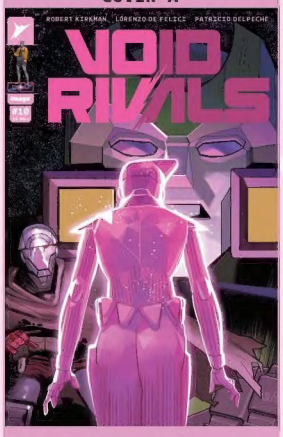

LORENZO DE FELICI

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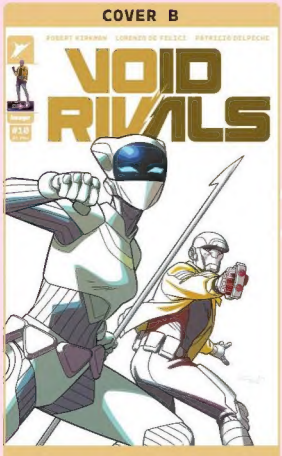
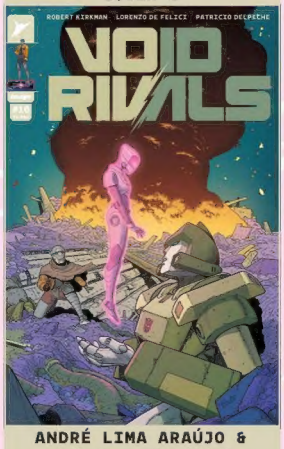


CORY WALKER

COVER C



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